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**THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) FOR
DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 3 AS
NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION WEEK (NIVW)**

November 13, 2006

The American Lung Association strongly supports the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) proclamation of November 27 – December 3 as National Influenza Vaccination Week and urges all Americans to get vaccinated this season. The American Lung Association has recently launched an educational initiative, the *Faces of Influenza*, that is designed to “put a face” on this serious disease and to inform healthy and high-risk individuals about the benefits of vaccination.

In addition to this new campaign, the American Lung Association continues to offer its Flu Clinic Locator as a public service. By typing in their 5-digit zip code, site visitors can receive a list of immunization clinics in their area. Site visitors may also schedule reminders and sign up to receive seasonal influenza news. The Flu Clinic Locator will remain active as long as public flu immunization clinics are offered.

The best way to reduce the effects of influenza is through annual vaccination. There are many *Faces of Influenza*—people who should be immunized against influenza every year. Vaccination is especially important for children 6 months up to 5 years of age, persons

aged 50 years and older and those with underlying medical conditions, such as asthma or diabetes,. In addition, health care workers and those in contact with high-risk groups should also receive annual influenza vaccinations . Increasing awareness of the importance of annual influenza vaccination is the key to ensuring everyone is fully protected this year.

“We commend the HHS and CDC for proclaiming a National Influenza Vaccination Week. Two out of three Americans should be vaccinated every year, which means it’s likely each one of us knows someone whose well-being, good health or life depends on getting an influenza immunization each and every year,” says Norman Edelman, MD, Chief Medical Officer of the American Lung Association. “Despite serious health risks associated with influenza, many people, including people with chronic health problems, young children and those 50 years and older, are not getting immunized.”

Each year, influenza and its complications are responsible for more than 200,000 hospitalizations and approximately 36,000 deaths. The nation’s leading health experts recommend anyone who wishes to reduce their risk for influenza infection to be immunized this year.

About the American Lung Association

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to prevent lung disease and promote lung health. Lung disease death rates continue to increase while other leading causes of death have declined. The American Lung Association funds vital research on the causes of and treatments for lung disease. With the generous support of the public, the American Lung Association is “*Improving life, one breath at a time.*”

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